

## **Names of God from the Bible**

### **51 – Consuming Fire**

*All God's Names are eternal names – so He is still Consuming Fire for us today.*

#### **Reading: Hebrews 12:18-29**

Our God is awesome! Surely it is not until we get a glimpse of the majesty, purity and holiness of God that we begin to understand, in any measure, the meaning of mercy and grace. God's mercy given unconditionally to us, sinners. Mercy saving us from what we do deserve – God's wrath against sin of any kind. God's grace giving us what we don't deserve. Unmerited grace. Sinners adopted into God's family, forgiven and made to sit with Christ in Heavenly realms.

God declared that He is a consuming fire. If you prefer it in today's parlance, it could equate with, *"Don't mess with Me!"* A reminder to us all that God is not like us. We are His creation; He made us. We have no right to tell God what to do. We have been given a freewill, not so we can ignore, mock, abuse or blaspheme God, but so we can willingly follow His plans and purposes for our lives, out of love rather than duty.

God is a good God and His plans for us are always not only good but the best for us. If we choose to follow them, we experience peace, joy, significance and a complete sense of fulfilment.

When the crowd shouted out at Jesus' trial: *"Crucify Him"*, they were really saying, *"We will not surrender to this Man's rule."* Jesus' Kingdom is established in the hearts, minds and will of people. However, the significance was not only that the Christ suffered but also the impact of a lost world rejecting its only hope of redemption.

When Jesus was arrested and Peter used his sword to try and offer some token resistance, Jesus replied, *"Do you think I cannot call on My Father and He will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?"* Were I God at the time, I would have been a 'consuming fire' and the enemies of God would have returned to the dust from which they had been formed! However, the Consuming Fire had a greater plan – my redemption and yours. Eternal salvation for those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh and crucified for us.

As we see the evidence of God as Consuming Fire in the Bible, we see its purpose is for a warning. *"Don't go there. Don't even think of going there."* We need to remember that we are finite and human; God is infinite and divine. God was trying to establish suitable boundaries to keep our arrogance and presumptive actions in check.

We also see evidence of God wanting to establish a distinction between 'common' and 'holy'. We are common; God is holy. God established the principles of worship, the way we could enjoy a relationship with God. Sacrifices for sins, offerings of worship and devotion. God takes our relationship seriously.

As we look at the relationship through the lens of the New Testament, we can see why. Jesus Christ had to suffer and die so that we could enjoy the freedom of a relationship with God as Father. There was no other way and the cost was astronomical. We could never ever pay the price in monetary terms or even in terms of giving our lives – the price was far too high. Only Jesus was 'qualified'. Only Jesus was the spotless Lamb of God able to satisfy the righteous demands of a holy God.

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Consequently, worship is precious to God. It speaks of perfect purity and unquestioned voluntary obedience.

John the Baptist told his followers that Jesus was coming and that He would baptise the people with the Holy Spirit and with fire. That's one of the things the Holy Spirit does – burn away the rubbish from our lives and ignite us with fire for Jesus and His Great Commission.

As every name of God is an eternal Name, we need to ponder and take this Name seriously, too.

### **What does that name mean for us today**

Don't take God's offer of salvation lightly. Don't presume you are able to tell God what to do. Don't treat the Holy as common. Just because God doesn't consume us, it doesn't mean He is impotent or approving.

### **Prayer**

*Father, I thank You that although You are Consuming Fire, You treat us with mercy and grace. Please help me to never take for granted. Amen*

### **Additional Readings**

- Deuteronomy 4:15-24
- Leviticus 10:1-3
- Luke 3:7-18

### **Questions**

1. What is the work of the Holy Spirit today?
2. Has God revealed Himself as the 'Consuming Fire' to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that Name?